

WILLIAM RAINEY HARPER COLLEGE
BUSINESS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE DIVISION
GENERAL COURSE OUTLINE

PSC	101	American Politics and Government	(3-0)	3
Course Prefix	Course Number	Course Title	Lec-Lab	Credit Hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Focuses on political involvement, elections campaigns, interest groups, Congress, courts, the presidency, and the Constitution. Discusses how our government runs as well as current political controversies. Utilizes political figures as guest speakers, and offers opportunities for political participation, especially in election years.

TOPICAL OUTLINE

- I. Introduction: Foundations of Political Science and Democracy
- II. The Constitution: Convention and Ideas
- III. Federalism
- IV. Civil Liberties
- V. Civil Rights, Diversity, and Multiculturalism
- VI. Public Opinion, Political Socialization, and Political Action
- VII. Mass Media
- VIII. Political Parties
- IX. Nominations and Campaigns
- X. Elections and Voting Behavior
- XI. Interest Groups
- XII. Congress
- XIII. The Executive Branch and the Presidency
- XIV. The Judiciary
- XV. Domestic Policy
- XVI. National Security and Foreign Policy

METHOD OF PRESENTATION

1. Lecture
2. Class discussion
3. Cooperative learning
4. Films and videos
5. Required texts
6. Articles
7. Guest lecturers

STUDENT OUTCOMES (The student should...)

1. demonstrate the meaning and practice of principles and institutions of American government.
2. demonstrate the application of particular constitutional, federal, or state laws as evidenced by presenting convincing arguments either for or against a particular judicial case in writing and/or in oral debates.
3. explain and analyze news articles on American government showing how certain principles and policies apply.
4. evaluate and analyze specific issues: campaigns, elections, laws, public policies, or political institutions.
5. understand and explain the challenges facing American democracy.
6. explain the role of citizens in society and in the governance of the country.
7. evaluate and analyze the similarities and differences among civil rights movements in the United States.

8. understand and explain both the challenges and opportunities of diversity and multiculturalism in the United States.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

1. Three (3) examinations (multiple choice and/or essay)
2. Oral presentations
3. Written assignments
4. Projects
5. Research paper

TEXTBOOKS

Summers, Understanding American Government, 2007.
Illinois, Handbook of Illinois Government, 2005.

Prepared by: Bobby Summers
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